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vs. the Biological Examination of Water' was read by Prof. McMurtrie, in the absence of the author.

In the discussion which followed, the opinion was general that to arrive at a sound conclusion it is necessary to make both examinations, and that as much information as possible should be known of the history of a water.

Prof. McMurtrie stated that in examining a large number of wells in the State of Illinois he found no cases of typhoid fever resulting from the use of well waters in which the nitrites, free and albumenoid ammonia were all low.

These determinations, in conjunction with careful investigation of the history of a water, he found a pretty safe guide to an opinion.

Dr. Horne described an interesting case of large increase of nitrites on mixing three water supplies, the nitrites being low in each of the waters tested separately. Prof. Speyers suggested that the presence of hydrogen sulfid, or other reducing agent in one of the waters, acting on nitrates in the others, might produce this phenomenon.

A paper 'On the Heat of Solution of Certain Carbon Compounds' was read by Prof. C. L. Speyers.

Dr. Austen read a "Note on Runge's 'Bildungstrieb' of Substances," and exhibited a copy of this old and rare work.

Mr. Cutts read a paper, by T. S. Gladding, 'On the Gravimetric Method of Determining Phosphoric Acid by the Phospho-Molybdate Method.'

'Specimens showing the Effects of Gun Cotton Explosions' were exhibited by Mr. W. H. Burleigh.

The meeting was then adjourned to the second Friday in December.

DURAND WOODMAN, *Secretary*.

#### BOSTON SOCIETY OF NATURAL HISTORY.

THE Society met for the first meeting of the season on November 6th; 116 persons were present.

The presentation of papers by title, and matters of business announced, the Society listened to Prof. George Lincoln Goodale, who spoke on some peculiarities of Australasian vegetation. Limiting his remarks chiefly to Australia, Prof.

Goodale alluded to the natural and political divisions of that vast island-continent and described, with the aid of a series of lantern slides, some of the chief characteristics of its flora, the northeastern shores fringed with mangroves, the distinctness of the desert vegetation, the size and magnificence of the giant Eucalypts, and the interesting features of species of *Acacia* and *Casuarina* and of tree ferns. Attention was called to the vast number of genera and species that constitute the Australian flora, a single lantern slide showing at a moderate estimate more than 150 species; the total number of species found in Australia is estimated at about 10,000. Australian vegetation is supposed to have been derived from some point westward of the continent.

SAMUEL HENSHAW, *Secretary*.

#### NEW BOOKS.

*Electricity and Magnetism*. FRANCIS E. NIPHER. St. Louis, Mo. 1895. Pp. xi+426. \$3.25.

*The Intellectual Rise of Electricity*. PARK BENJAMIN. New York, D. Appleton & Co. 1895. Pp. 611.

*Transmissions par câbles Métalliques*. H. LÉAUTÉ and A. BÉRARD. Gauthier-Villars et. fils and G. Masson. Pp. 184.

*Les Nouvelles Théories Chimiques*. A. ÉTARD. Paris, G. Masson and Gauthier-Villars et fils. Pp. 196.

*Guide d'océanographie*. J. THOULET. G. Masson and Gauthier-Villars et fils. 1895. Pp. 224.

*Histoire de la philosophie atomistique*. LÉOPOLD MABILLEAU. Paris, Félix Alcan. Pp. 560.

*De Saint-Louis a Tripoli par le lac Tchad*. P. L. MONTEIL. Paris, Félix Alcan. Pp. 462.

*The Story of the Indian*. GEORGE BIRD GRINNELL. New York, D. Appleton & Co. 1895. Pp. x+270. \$1.50.

*The Story of the Earth*. H. G. SEELEY. New York, D. Appleton & Co. Pp. vi+186. 40 cts.

*Der Schuss*. FREDERICK BRANDEIS. Vienna, Pesth and Leipzig, A. Hartleben. 1895. Pp. 280.

*Englishe Chrestomathie*. Vienna, Pesth and Leipzig, A. Hartleben. 1895. Pp. 182.